



Minnesota

Board of Animal Health

Safeguarding Animal Health

www.bah.state.mn.us

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, February 10, 2005

Contact: Malissa Fritz, BAH Communications Director, 651-296-2942, ext. 35
Michael Schommer, MDA Communications Director, 651-297-1629

National Animal Identification System enrollment underway

Minnesota sends out 35,000 registration letters to livestock producers

ST. PAUL, Minn. – More than 35,000 Minnesota livestock producers should have received a letter from the Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) in the last week. Each letter contains details on the state's National Animal Identification System (NAIS) and premises registration.

BAH and MDA are working together to register all Minnesota livestock premises (farms, auction markets, processing plants, etc.) by the end of the year. The state has received funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement a premises identification system and to begin work on livestock identification in the state. In the event of a disease outbreak, the goal of the NAIS is to be able to trace potentially exposed livestock within 48 hours.

Minnesota Board of Animal Health NAIS Project Manager David Wiklund said the U.S. needs to keep pace with the rest of the world if we want to remain competitive and the NAIS can help.

“Keeping pace includes livestock identification and movement documentation,” said Wiklund. “To have credibility with consumers and trading partners, an animal identification system must ensure the ability to track each and every animal. The first step toward such a system is a sound method for identifying livestock premises.”

In order to accomplish this, all Minnesota livestock premises need to be identified. Producers can register for the program by filling out the Premises Registration Card they received in the mail, by contacting BAH at 651-296-2942, ext. 17, or by logging on to www.bah.state.mn.us.

A common question regarding the NAIS system is whether or not producer information will be kept confidential. “Minnesota producer privacy will be a high priority throughout the implementation,” said Wiklund. “The system will collect only information needed for effective disease control.” In the coming months, federal and state legislation may be developed to address data privacy concerns.

On February 24, a free statewide informational NAIS presentation will be broadcast to locations throughout Minnesota. For a complete list of times and locations, log onto the Board's website at www.bah.state.mn.us, or call 651-296-2942, ext. 17.